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"We must open wider the doors of opportunity...  
for the good of our country and all our people"  
President Eisenhower

## RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Committee for RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Under Secretary, Department of the Interior

Under Secretary, Department of Agriculture (Chairman)

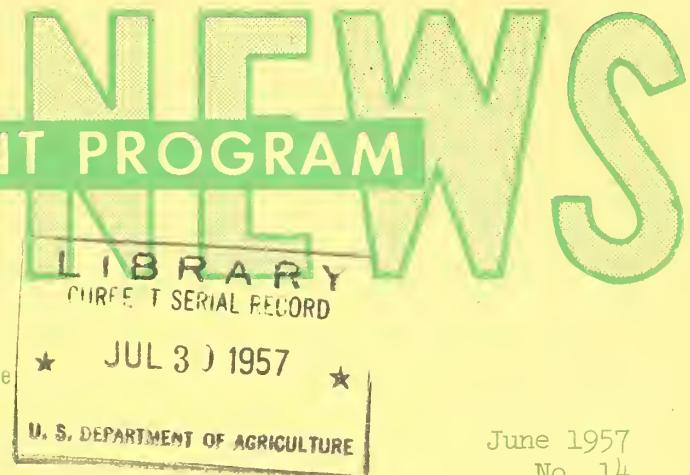
Under Secretary, Department of Commerce

Under Secretary, Department of Labor

Under Secretary, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare

Administrator, Small Business Administration

Member, Council of Economic Advisers



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Shreveport, Louisiana, and Fort Smith, Arkansas, will be the scene of the second and third regional conferences on the Rural Development Program in mid-June. Each of these conferences will include a session to which the public is invited. The first regional conference was held in Lexington, Kentucky, May 13-15.

The Louisiana-Texas Regional Work Conference on the Rural Development Program will convene June 17 at the Washington-Youree Hotel in Shreveport, Louisiana. There will be a series of group sessions dealing with program operations in these two States, and the meeting will end on June 19 with a session to which the public is invited, (beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the auditorium of the Exhibits Building, Louisiana State Fairgrounds). Dr. D. W. Williams, Vice Chancellor of Agriculture, Texas A & M College System, will preside. Mr. Donald A. Hipkins, Deputy Administrator of the Small Business Administration, will speak on the subject, "Creating Job Opportunities in Underdeveloped Areas", and there will be an address by Under Secretary of Agriculture, True D. Morse.

The Arkansas-Oklahoma-New Mexico Regional Conference on the Rural Development Program will open with a general meeting on June 20 to which the public is invited. This session, which will begin at 8:30 a. m. and run until 1 p. m., also includes addresses by Administrator Hipkins and Under Secretary Morse. Following the public session, representatives from the three States and from Federal agencies will participate in a two-day working session.

(If you want more information on these meetings or the complete programs, write the Editor, Rural Development Program NEWS, Office of Information, Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.)

THE FIRST REGIONAL CONFERENCE for Kentucky, Tennessee and West Virginia attracted leaders from 15 states -- Texas to Maryland, Florida to Minnesota. More than 35 Federal, State, and county agencies sent representatives to the conference which was held in Lexington, Kentucky, May 13-15. Numerous private organizations were also represented, including the Farm Bureau, private banks,

This is one of a series of periodic reports on Rural Development Program activities of business, farm, civic, government and other community leadership working together. If you have information that might be of interest to those participating in the program or you wish to receive this Newsletter, address communications to the Editor, Rural Development Program News, Office of Information, Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

utilities, newspapers and magazines, Chambers of Commerce, and church groups. There were two days of work sessions for 10 groups. The final day was devoted to a general meeting and concluded with a luncheon which was addressed by Dr. John A. Perkins, Under Secretary of the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Under Secretary Perkins in discussing the place of education in the economic development of rural areas said, "The development of rural areas clearly calls for a variety of approaches. One factor that is basic to all the others is better education..."

"...The typical high school graduate, during his adult earning years, will receive \$50,000 more than the typical 8th grade graduate and \$30,000 more than the high school dropout. The college graduate is estimated to earn on the average \$100,000 more in a lifetime than his contemporary who did not go beyond high school. Of course, there are individual exceptions, but generally speaking, it pays to stay in school..."

"The community interested in attracting technical industry--and most industries in our complex and specialized society are technical--holds out a major inducement if its local labor force is an educated one..."

"It seems to me a somewhat mistaken idea that there should be one type of schooling for city children and quite another variety for rural children..."

"If your schools develop worth-while men and women, the development of your counties will be assured..."

President Frank G. Dickey, of the University of Kentucky, opened the Lexington meeting with such statements as these:

"I do not believe...that any meeting or any group (referring to over 175 that have met recently at the University) holds within its hands the potentials of this group interested in Rural Development.

"...You are working with a program which has unlimited possibilities for millions of other citizens of our nation. To say that the eyes of the informed public are upon you would be an understatement..."

"The University of Kentucky is proud to be one of the institutions connected with ... such a noble and wonderful experiment. We are putting a great deal of manpower and a tremendous amount of time and energy into this rural development project. We believe in it..."

Burl St. Clair, President of the Kentucky Farm Bureau, pointed out that no development will take place unless the people themselves provide leadership. In his challenging address he said: "Our concern is paramount.

"Rural areas include small towns as well as the countryside...all people in such areas are rural.

"Problems of farmers whose low income is due to low output are quite different from those of commercial farmers. Present farm programs are not solving the problems of this group. The solutions are not in agriculture alone.

"Finding -- or developing local leaders is essential. Those whose need is greatest must participate...leaders must stay far enough ahead to maintain interest."

Con Welch, a banker and chairman of the Hardin County, Tennessee, Rural Development Committee, spoke from successful experience in helping get major progress in his county:

"As a business man I see in the Rural Development Program the greatest concentrated, realistic approach to the problem of the low income farmer that has been made in our time..."

"The success or failure of any undertaking depends more upon the mental attitude of its leadership than on any other factor. People from all segments of our society and from all the agencies of our communities have joined hands in this great undertaking..."

"Never have I observed an undertaking in which so many agencies and individuals have been united on one team to undertake to solve a problem..."

"...The area which approaches the solution of this problem by strictly agricultural means is doomed for failure from the start.

"One serious problem is that of a continuous loss of population of our young people in their productive years... This represents a great loss in the investment we have in these people and in their productive capacity. In failing to provide jobs for these young workers, we are undermining the future of our areas for they are leaving literally by the thousands and finding jobs and making their homes in the industrial centers..."

"Many of our youth who have migrated to the industrial centers have found that they are poorly equipped to handle jobs involving any degree of skill because they have had no training for such. In a great majority of our high schools the only vocational training offered is vocational agriculture..."

Director J. O. Knapp, Agricultural Extension Service, West Virginia University, told the meeting: "In 1954, when President Eisenhower, in a special message to Congress, called attention to the problems peculiar to low-income farmers, we recognized that he was referring to about seventy per cent (70%) of the farmers in our State.

"West Virginia has many under-employed farm families. Off-the-farm employment must be secured to supplement the earnings of these farm families.

"How well the problems are solved will depend upon how well the various agencies and local people work together."

A summary of conclusions reached by the 10 working groups was given by Dr. Ernest J. Nesius, such as --

The groups agreed that small farmers have problems different from the larger farmers in that small farms do not provide full productive employment, and this makes it difficult for the families to maintain an adequate level of living.

The decisions for action for self-betterment of communities, counties or trades areas should be made by the people at the local level.

The main committees at the county level should be made up of lay people (volunteer leaders) with the paid workers as ex-officio members.

The responsibility for a program and action at the local level should rest with the local county committees.

It is believed that local people are not aware of the tremendous resources available from the various agencies and organizations which could be of help to them.

The trade area approach is favored because of the added value it has in solving the broad problems which cannot be tackled on a local basis.

It was anticipated that the rural development idea will expand to other areas because the idea itself is so fundamental.

In final analysis the success of the Rural Development Program depends largely on the lay leadership.

Frank J. Welch, Dean of Agriculture, University of Kentucky, said,

"Today, in fabulous America, the existence of some 1-1/2 million farm families, almost a third of the total, with gross incomes of less than \$1,000 per year certainly offers a challenge to all of us interested in rural people as well as in agricultural problems per se.

"This program encompasses individual farm and area adjustments, the introduction of new farm enterprises and the expansion of old ones, the establishment of new industries and new markets, the revitalization of institutional services, the provision of needed credit, and perhaps most of all, the development of a feeling of confidence and assurance on the part of all the people participating in such a program that progress and solid achievement can be had."

True D. Morse, Under Secretary of Agriculture, in his address used many examples to show how counties and areas are getting more income and better living for farm families through the Rural Development Program. For example, he referred to new factories in just six of the counties with potentials of over \$6,000,000 per year in new incomes and activities. Mr. Morse also cited new classes in ~~values and skills~~; forestry and wood industry expansion; new farm income sources; improved marketing -- at higher prices; and better health facilities being developed.